



94-09-07: Statement of Comm. of Rights of the Child, Mrs.Hoda Badran

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AS WRITTEN

Statement

Delivered by Hoda Badran

Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of The Child

When population and development are the subject mater to be discussed,
 children represent a significant group within such discussion. Not only
 because of the weight of their size in the population but because their
 state of well being today determines the future state of development of
 their society. In terms of size the less developed regions have on the
 average 36 per cent of their population under fifteen years. In Africa the
 percentage rises to 45 percent. In terms of the linkage between children's
 st ate of well being and development it is an indisputable healthy
 childhood leads to healthy productive adulthood which is a basic

requirements for societal development.

As well stated in a recent publication "respect for and protection of children's rights is the starting point for the full development of the individual's potential in an atmosphere of freedom, dignity and justice".

In spite of these facts we have with humility to confess that a sizable number of children are increasingly living in difficult circumstances and are increasingly facing serious problems. Children are, for example, subjected to new forms of slavery, they are abused, they enter the labor market so early and drop-out school, they provide for their families instead of being provided for, they are pushed into prostitution and exploited in organ transplants.

Children are also many times drafted into the army and sent to wars in great numbers. Studying the draft programme of action of this conference it is noticeable that the document acknowledges the rights of the child as a critical area for the achievement of the important population and development objectives. Under chapter IV the document has a specific section on children and youth with a set of objectives and actions. Because of the prevalent discriminatory practices inflicted on the girl child the document has also singled out a part with specific objectives and actions to remedy such situation. The section on children and youth makes a particular reference to the convention on the Rights of the Child.

That convention was approved in November 1989 unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly. It was described by the Under-Secretary - General for Human Rights then as "One of the most important human rights instruments ever adopted by the international community". The convention

is designed as UNICEF press summarizes to elevate nations political and humanitarian obligations towards their children from the level of best intentions to international law. A step which binds state parties to higher social, economic and legislative standards, and oblige them to report to the international community on their children's well-being.

As of April of this year there were 158 state parties to the convention on the Rights of the child. This is unprecedented situation where no other international human rights covenant has been ratified so quickly by so many states. The convention has particular characteristics among which is the holistic approach to different types of human rights, the balance between the right of the child to participate in decisions and the right of the family and its responsibility to guide, the need to make the convention widely publicized and the important role of the NGOs.

Like other instruments of human rights an international monitoring mechanism called the committee on the rights of the child has been established and state parties has to report on their implementation of the convention to that committee. The committee has been distinguished by certain activities which enhance its monitoring role. Its informal meetings supported by UNISEX is just one example of such activities. The committee has also been commended by many for its achievement but the monitoring procedures needs to be strengthened and many challenges have to be taken by the committee, by countries by the UN family and by NGOs to fully implement the convention.

I am taking this opportunity while addressing such distinguished delegations to ask you to agree on actions related to the rights of the child contained within the programme of action of the conference. Beside I am also putting to you the following requests some of which have already been stated in the Vienna Declaration and programme of Action:

1. For countries who are not yet state parties to the convention to ratify it as soon as possible.

2. Countries who are already state parties to the convention to fulfill their commitments with utmost seriousness in terms of implementation; allocation of resources and punctual reporting to the committee on the Rights of the child.

3. Countries who have made reservations to review and examine such reservations with the intention of waiving those which may not be any more relevant or necessary.

4. I would like all governments to put necessary resources to support the work of the UN centre for Human Rights in Geneva to enable it to serve the different committees and in particular to serve the committee on the Rights of the child.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I will end by saying that the well being of every child whether rich or poor, whether from south or from the West is not the responsibility of his mother or his family solely. It is the responsibility of every body and all of all of us. Let us determine a nd work towards that no child in the world population would die from neglect no child goes without education, no child is malnourished, no child goes is abused or exploited education, no or exploited or not s wanted or not respected.

For further information, please contact: popin@undp.org
POPIN Gopher site: <gopher://gopher.undp.org/11/ungophers/popin>
POPIN WWW site: <http://www.undp.org/popin>